The Sunday School Service.

BY E. L. YODER.

Aug. 31*st*, 1884.

God's Works and Words.—Psalm 19 : 1—14.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.—Ps. 138 : 2.

[*Open the Bible and read the lesson.*]

INTRODUCTION.

The Psalmist speaks of God in nature and revelation and magnifies his name as the author of both. He recognizes the fact that there can be no lack of harmony between the two, and that each is an open book for man's study, wherein he may learn of God's perfections, his greatness and his glory. Like all others, David knew of no other source from whence he could learn of God, and he was delighted to find that they testify to God's majesty and goodness. As a result of his meditations he exhorts to making good use of God's revelations, and as an incentive alludes to the promised reward.

LESSON.

The voice of nature should be heeded as the voice of God. We should study Him in his works and apply the knowledge thus derived with reverence and gratitude. The study of the heavens is instructive in that it gives higher conceptions of his creative powers, and although David's knowledge of astronomy was no doubt limited as compared with later developments, yet there is nothing in the wonderful poetry of this psalm which is false to science, and had he possessed all the knowledge of modern astronomy, he could not have voiced more truly the sentiments of the thoughtful soul that has acquainted itself with the wonderful revelations of modern astronomy. The goings forth of the sun from one end of the heavens to the other, shining upon all God's creatures, showed alike God's greatness and his goodness.

Then he proceeds to contrast the natural revelations of God with the

FULLNESS AND PERFECTNESS OF HIS WRITTEN WORD.

We want to know more of God than we can learn of Him through nature. We are therefore cited to the "Law of the Lord, which is perfect." It is perfect because it supplies all that is lacking in the law of nature. It teaches us our duty to God and acquaints us with a moral law, the transgression of which is sin. This moral law is perfect as compared with human invention with the same end in view. No rule of conduct ever invented by man can equal the Law of God. The law of the ten commandments have stood the criticism of centuries and yet they stand. It reveals unto us God's grace. It converts the soul from ignorance and sin. It makes wise the simple, if we become disciples of the word. The truth edifies, but we must believe it as truth and practice it as such. It rejoiceth the heart. The truth which makes the heart right gives joy to the heart that is right ; enlightening the eyes that we may find the true path of happiness. Enduring forever. it endures forever because it is pure,—purity is a sign of life ; impurity is a sign of decay, —hence its teachings give and sustain life.

God has revealed to man in his word, his duty, and the reward that follows a compliance therewith, as well as the consequences of disobedience; and the prayer of David for deliverance from presumptuous sins, shows that we may suffer the penalties of a violation of God's laws, even when done presumptuously or ignorantly. As we advance in divine life we will discover that what we formerly considered as harmless was really sinful, and therefore the prayer to be delivered from secret faults, is but the natural desire of a God-fearing man.

Splinters.

"I don't like the minister!" That settles the matter. If you don't like the minister, you have no duties to perform. Not liking the minister absolves you from all responsibility. The fact that you "don't like the minister" releases you from your vows. If you are a trustee or steward you need not take any further interest in the financial affairs of the congregation. The fact that the people intrusted you with certain duties which you engaged to perform, is neither here nor there if you don't "like the minister." Certainly not. The easiest of all ways to get rid of supporting the church and its ordinances is simply to say, "I don't like the minister." Of course you need not go to prayer meeting—why should a man pray if he "doesn't like the minister?" There are a number of reasons why some "don't like the minister." Some of these reasons are good no doubt ; but many are the reverse. Neither the good nor the bad absolve a hearer from his duty. Perhaps it would be presumption to ask why you don't like the minister."—*N. W. Christian Advocate.*

From Carleton, Neb.

It afforded us much pleasure while brother S. H. Bashor was here, to accompany him across the country to Republic county, Kansas, where his sister lives. We drove about forty miles, and found it to be a good half a day's drive. The country is quite new in this county (Thayer), compared with that of Republic, a homestead county. But it all lies very much the same and finer land could not be created, but it was not the intention to say anything about the country. Brother Bashor had not seen his sister for thirteen years, and he was very anxious to meet her. We stopped before a pleasant farm house, which according to direction we had received on the way, was supposed to be the home of Louisa Bashor—now Williams. Brother B. said, "Yes, this must be the place ; she was always such a friend of flowers." And though the sister was looking for her brother, she yet did not know him. Well it did not take much to convince her, and indeed, thirteen years will make a big change. Mrs. Williams is a member of the German Baptist church, and a very devoted sister we take her to be. Her husband is very favorable to her church, but finds fault with annual meeting rule, unsupported ministry, &c. And now comes what we intended to tell. Mr. Williams had spoken to his conservative friends about Brother Bashor's coming to their neighborhood. Lemuel Hillery, their elder, is his nearest neighbor. It was once thought that they would grant the use of their place of worship,—a large, board tent,—for one or two services while Brother Bashor was there. On Sabbath morning we went to regular German Baptist service. Brother Hillery being sick, M. M. Eshelman was present to fill the appointment. We noticed but few present who do not belong to their church, and the "peculiarities" seemed to be so marked that we wondered if others not members took any interest. At a council of a few of the leading brethren it was decided that "Much as we would like to give them the use of the house, according to minutes of annual meeting we can not do it." After service Mr. Williams announced that there would be an afternoon service at the school house by brother Bashor. There was poor opportunity to advertise yet we were pleased to see a very fair audience of intelligent men and women present, and it is my impression that good was done, that seed was sown that will bring forth fruit when the harvest comes.

We had a pleasant trip, enjoyed our visit, and think there would be a field open for a minister of the Brethren church at this place. We trust that our arm of the church will never need to deny the use of its places of worship to any who are working for the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom.

H. M. LICHTY.

The Door Locked After the Horse was Gone.

After we sold our place in Carroll county, Indiana, we brought a farm in Tippecanoe county. Wife and I held our membership with the Pearmont congregation of the German Baptist church while we lived in Carroll county, but when we settled here in Tippecanoe county, we got our certificates, intending to hold our membership with the Fairview congregation. After meditating over the confused condition of the church we concluded to retain our papers awhile. In the meanwhile our son united with the Brethren church at Dayton, Ohio, so we concluded to hear some of the Brethren preach ; accordingly we had brother Swihart to stop and give us a few sermons last spring. The brother held forth the word in its true colors, and we gave him our letters, and thus attached ourselves to the Burlington congregation of the Brethren church.

After the lapse of several months a committee of German Baptists came to find out what we had done with our certificates, and seemed very friendly until they found out that we had given our church letters to brother Swihart. Then they invited us to church meeting. We told them that we did not think it worth while to go. They then said they guessed they would have to take up our case anyhow whether we went or not. We told them that we did not think they had a case, and so the matter was left.

After some time we were notified that we had been *expelled* for giving our letters to brother Swihart instead of giving them in the the Fairview congregation. People whose church government compels them to follow after and kick and thrash those who withdraw voluntarily and quietly are to be pitied. They must be hard pressed for business. It actually looks about as much like business as to lock the door after the horse is out and gone. Yes, it reminds one very much of children's play, but then the gospel says, "In malice be ye children."

SOLOMON BOSARD.

Transitville, Ind.

The Sop Question.

Brother M. Forney says, "In No. 29, present volume, I find an endorsement of S. W. Wilt's communication on the Supper question by N. A. Frame," he says, none of the Apostles partook of the sop except Judas, and that we do not want a sop on the table. If he will read his Bible he will find that the twelve apostles ate of the same that Judas did. I agree with brother Forney at once that they did all partake of the Supper, I believe it was a full meal, but I do not believe that any except Judas partook of the sop. Brother Forney let us hear what John in his 13th chapter, 25th and 26th verses says, "Lord who is it, Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop when I have dipped it, and when he had dipped the sop he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon."—*Not to all.* Now brother, I ask you in all candor, had they all partaken of the sop, would not the same question come up again, Lord who is it? You gave to all of us, we don't know after all who it is. Therefore I repeat, none partook of the sop except Judas. If brother Forney was always accustomed to having soup on communion occasions I can't help it, custom, however, does not make law with me. Also, where brother F. gets his authority for saying that the Savior took a slice of bread and dipped it in the sop and then handed it to Judas, is more than I can tell. Brother F. let us get at the *truth* and then practice it, no difference what has been heretofore. Fraternally.

N. A. FRAME.

Elkhart, Ind.

Sop and Soup.

In No. 32, present volume, I notice a short communication by M. Forney against N. A. Frame's endorsement of my views, concerning the soup ordinarily upon the table at our Lovefeasts. I presume N. A. Frame will defend his assertions or stand corrected. I would have permitted the article to pass unnoticed had not M. F. tried to strike over the shoulder of N. A. F. and hit S. W. W. with his caution not to receive new ideas before comparing them with the Gospel. Gospel authority is what we want. Will M. F. please remember the question proposed and not turn off upon some side issue. Question: is essential to a proper observance of the Lord's Supper, that we have soup upon our tables at our Lovefeasts? If so, M. F. will please cite us to the gospel for it. If he shall fail, any one of the same faith will be accepted, only so that we get Gospel for it. But it will not do to try and mix up the dipping of a sop and dipping soup out of a dish, and say it is all the same. With this we close for the present; might have written more, had it not been for the use of the editor's pruning hook on a former occasion, the result of which was that a part of what we had written did not appear.

Yours in hope. S. W. WILT.

Berlin Pa.

The Sop of Judas.

I cannot find gospel proof to show that Judas ever partook of the sop. I would rather believe that he only received it from the hands of the Master and went immediately out. Matth. 26 : 23. and Mark 14 : 20. Luke says, "Behold the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. John 13 : 26, we read, "He it is to whom I shall give a sop when I have dipped it, and when he had dipped the sop he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon." Now examine John 13 : 18. "He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Did not all of the disciples eat bread with him? It seems to me the eating of that supper was connected with the eating of the Passover, and there and then the Christian dispensation was ushered in. We have in the ordinances instituted at that time portrayed a token of Christ's undying love. J. K. LEEDY.

A Cheering Letter.

Our church here is small in number but we feel a deep interest in the EVANGELIST, and are all glad to receive it because it has no other creed but the gospel, and that alone, which is the same thing to-day as it has been for years back, and it will be the same for all time in the future. No changes—which makes it founded upon a solid rock. Storms may beat on the Brethren church but it cannot fall, for it has a solid rock foundation. I hope and trust that our brethren feel as I do, to rather have our paper enlarged than to have it smaller, it is sure of success.

The members of the church in Lawrence would be very glad to have any of the ministers travelling through Kansas, stop with us if suitable. JOS. LITCHFIELD.

Lawrence, Kansas.

Four things indispose us for praying—inordinate sadness, very high spirits, ill temper, and a carnal worldly spirit.

Leaders and Drivers.

God is a leader, and a good one. As such, he appears before the church and the world in the word of God. God is the leader of his people. In the Old Testament he is frequently set forth in this relation. The prophets so presented him before God's ancient people. "I will lead them in paths they have not known." "Lead me in thy truth," prays the psalmist, and again, "Lead me, O Lord in thy righteousness." More than fifty times the Lord appears in the old Testament as the leader of his people. Paul speaks of those who were "led by the Spirit of God." And again and again this idea of divine leadership is presented to us in the New Testament. until in Revelation we read, "He shall lead them to living fountains of water."

A few times God appears as a driver. After the rebellion in Eden God "drove out the man," and so all through Bible history, we read of those whom the Lord "drove out" ; but they are always the enemies of the Most High. Jesus "drove them all out of the temple" who had desecrated the place and thrown a spirit of merchandise about its altars. And so "the wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death."

A careful study of the Lord as a leader and as a driver would have many helpful suggestions to those who expected to follow his example. It will soon appear that we have little business to do as drivers. The minister, the class-leader, the Sunday school worker is not a driver but a leader. It is impossible for us to drive men into the kingdom of heaven. Even the Lord does not undertake to do such a business. When men will not be led, then he sometimes drives them away from his presence. But his people he leads forth by the right way that they may go to a city of habitation. Then it must be supreme folly for us to suppose that we can drive men into the kingdom.

It is therefore a great mistake for Christian teachers to try to drive men into a religious experience or life which they have not themselves entered. A devoted man could only say, "Follow me as I follow Christ." A preacher or leader will not get his people far beyond himself, and fathers and mothers who wish to raise their children in the fear of God must themselves go before them and lead the way of a devoted Christian life. They cannot scold, nor switch, nor paddle them into honesty, integrity, virtue' or religion as some vainly suppose.

There is a great deal of church work done on the driving plan, as if men could be driven along almost any way. You can drive hellward, but if you want to get them heavenward you must absolutely lead them. May God make our church a leader and not a driver.—*Religious Telescope.*

They Are Christains.

"I would have you to understand, sir, that I am a Christian gentleman," said Waterhaven to Firehall in the midst of an amiable discussion of the question of infant baptism.

"And I would have you understand, sir, that I am a meek and lowly follower of Emanuel," retorted the other.

"I cannot put up with profane and unholy remarks concerning baptism, sir, and I humbly request you to forego them."

"And, sir, I do not like your animadversions upon Methodism, sir, and I trust you will not repeat them."

"But I insist, sir, that your church teaches the abominable doctrine of infants in hell."

"And yours, sir, teaches that there is no way to go to heaven except by water."

"You are mistaken, sir."

"I insist upon it, sir."

"You are mistaken, I tell you,"

"You exaggerate, sir."

"You are a liar, sir."

"You, sir, are a dirty dog."

"I am a Christian gentleman, sir. Otherwise, I might be tempted to strike you."

"And I am a meek and lowly follower of Emanuel, sir, else I might be provoked to wrathfulness."

"We are Christians, gentlemen, so you may disperse. We are not pugilists, therefore you may not expect a physical encounter between us."

"He is right, gentlemen. There will be no funeral, for we are meek and lowly followers of Emanuel." Then the disappointed crowd adjourned to a saloon.

The great moments of life are but moments like the others. Your doom is spoken in a word or two. A single look from the eyes, a mere pressure of the hand may decide it, or of the lips though they cannot speak.

Oratory and poetry are of little value unless they reach the highest perfection; but history in whatever way it may be executed, is a source of pleasure.